

Madam Chairwoman, members of the committee:

My name is Kari Zeier, and I am the State Co-Director for Concerned Women for America of Montana.

The reason we have Common Core in Montana is because the Montana Board of Public Education (BPE) adopted the standards on November 4, 2011. As you consider your vote on HB 377, please consider the following:

The BPE's approved minutes from the November 3-4, 2011 meeting, regarding Mr. Michael Hall from OPI state, "Mr. Hall briefly discussed the history in moving to the Common Core standards and that the decision was made for Montana to move from the Montana standards to the national Common Core Standards." By their own admission these are NATIONAL standards, not Montana's standards.

MCA 5-5-224. Education and local government interim committee. The education and local government interim committee has administrative rule review, draft legislation review, program evaluation, and monitoring functions for the following executive branch agencies and the entities attached to agencies for administrative purposes:

- (a) state board of education;
- (b) board of public education;
- (c) board of regents of higher education; and
- (d) office of public instruction.

On November 14, 2014 at the BPE's meeting, Deputy Superintendent of Schools Dennis Parman was discussing the public comments from the hearing regarding the adoption of the preschool standards with the Montana Board of Public Education. Mr. Parman said in regards to the resolution passed by the Education and Local Government Interim Committee, "... They have no standing, that interim committee has no standing in terms of their ability to tell you what to do or how to do it. That having been said, um, they sat down and they talked about it and they discussed it and there were concerns expressed."

Legislative committees serve a vital purpose, are comprised of legislators who have been elected by the people of Montana and are empowered by state laws.

The fallacies within Common Core go beyond party lines. On January 24, 2015, the Washington State Democratic Central Committee passed a resolution opposing Common Core. It is time to stop playing politics and work together to create new educational standards for Montanans, by Montanans. Our teachers and children deserve better than what has been given to them. This mandate stifles the individual creativity of teachers by forcing them to teach to a national standard versus each individual Montana students' needs.

Article X, Section 1 of the Montana Constitution states that it is the goal of the people to establish a system of education which will develop the full educational potential of each person. National standards put forth by a Board which disregards the legislative roles and processes hardly develops the full educational potential of each of Montana's children. Furthermore, Common Core limits teachers and usurps local control through yet another federal overreach. We can do better and you have the authority to begin this process. Vote YES on HB 377.